URBAN HEN KEEPING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

These procedures and guidelines establish the regulatory framework for the keeping of urban hens within the City of Edmonton limits, and provide guidance for the selection of appropriate sites, the application processes and enforcement procedures to ensure successful urban hen keeping. In the development of these procedures and guidelines, the City of Edmonton reviewed best practices, communication plans, outcomes, and mitigation strategies of other municipalities who have made allowances for urban hen keeping. Zoning Bylaw requirements, potential health concerns, and provincial legislations were also carefully considered.

1 SITE REQUIREMENTS FOR HEN COOP AND RUN

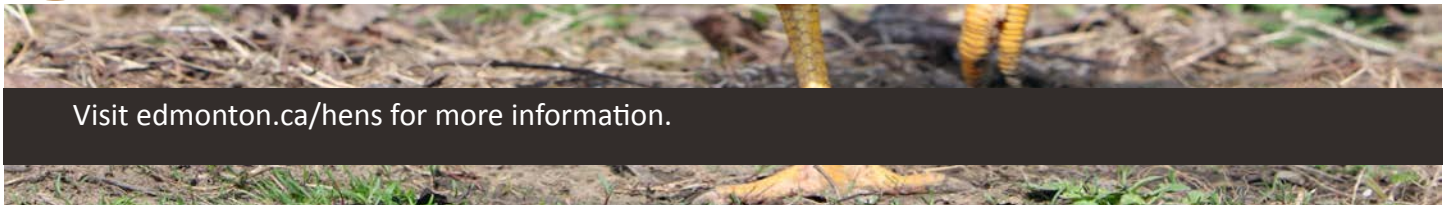
- Coops may only be located in backyards of properties that are completely fenced and secured. Some properties, due to the smaller size of a backyard or other situational factors, may not be deemed suitable for urban hen keeping through the application process.
- Coop sites should take into consideration backyard locations that would minimize impact to adjacent neighbours (away from bedroom windows, furthest point from building, etc).
- An approved site may house only one coop and run, and they must be in compliance with *Zoning Bylaw 12800*. All coops are reviewed against the *Zoning Bylaw 12800* and require Development Permits unless they meet the specific critera for exemption under Section 12.2. Consultation with a Development Officer/ Planner is recommended before purchasing or installing an accessory structure. Standard setback requirements are outlined in the *Zoning Bylaw*. The *Zoning Bylaw* requires that an accessory structure be located:
  - a minimum of 0.9m from a side property line,
  - a minimum of 18.0m from a front property line,
  - a minimum of 0.6m from the rear property line, and,
  - a minimum of 0.9m from any other buildings on the site.

2 NUMBER OF HENS AND COOP SIZE

- Approved sites must keep a minimum of three hens and shall not exceed eight hens per site. The recommended number is three to six. **Roosters are not permitted.** Hen Breed and numbers shall be indicated through the application process. Young hens (also called pullets) shall not be younger than 16 weeks old.
- A minimum of 0.37 square meters per hen is required for the coop, along with a minimum of 0.93 square meters per hen of for the run
- All coops must contain sufficient perch locations,have adequate ventilation, and be weather and predator proof.
- All hens on site shall be banded for identification and documented with the City.
- All hens must remain in the coop or an enclosed run unless directly supervised where they must then stay on the Licensed property.

3 NUISANCE CONDITIONS

- The site and coop must be properly maintained to prevent negative impacts, including but not limited to: attracting nuisance animals, the spread of food over the property, and excessive smells or noise.



Visit edmonton.ca/hens for more information.

4

STANDARD OF CARE

- Hen sites shall adhere to good management and husbandry practices, maintain hens in such a condition so as to prevent distress, disease, and welfare issues. Hens require appropriate food, liquid (unfrozen) water, shelter, light, warmth, ventilation, veterinary care and opportunities for essential behaviours such as scratching, pecking, dust-bathing and roosting, in order to be comfortable and healthy.
- Animal Control must be notified immediately of any disease or welfare issues that arise that may affect the public and the steps taken to rectify the situation.

5

WASTE & DISPOSAL

- Manure must be removed, discarded, and/or properly composted to prevent nuisance orders.
- There is to be no on-site slaugher or euthanizing of hens within City limits. Removal methods include (but are not limited to) humane euthanasia by a veterinarian, relocation to a farm, or taking hens to a licensed abattoir. Deceased birds should be double-bagged and placed for garbage collection or taken to a veterinarian for disposal. All changes to flock size must be reported to Animal Control as a Licence requirement.

6

TRAINING & MENTOR

- The Licencee(s) must have completed an accepted urban hen keeping course. It is also recommended that for the first year each site have support and assistance from a recognized mentor. These conditions must be met, or reasonable steps towards meeting the requirement must be made prior to a permanent Urban Hen Keeping Licence being issued. The Licensee shall provide proof of completion of a training course recognized by Animal Control as comprehensive and specific to the Alberta climate. Licencees will be required to take a competency test before the end of their first year.

7

INSPECTIONS

- The Licensee(s) shall make themselves and the coops available for inspection on reasonable request from Animal Control Peace Officers.
- An initial inspection of the coop, hens, and site will be conducted prior to final site approval and license being granted from the City of Edmonton.

8

REGISTRATION

- The Licensee must comply with all Provincial regulations around the keeping of hens. The Province of Alberta requires all owners of poultry (including small urban flocks) to register their flocks into the provincial database and obtain a Premise Identification (PID) Number. The PID enables the province to keep track of livestock site locations in case of potential disease outbreak. The Province will maintain communication with site owners should any information or incidents occur that would require site owners to take action.
- Neighbour notification process will be completed and letters submitted back to the City as part of the application submission.

9

ENFORCEMENT

- Poultry keeping is enforced under Section 27 of the *Animal Licensing and Control Bylaw 13145.*
- Animal Control Peace Officers will respond to all complaints and initiate investigations when warranted. When enforcement or other animal husbandry issues arise, City administration will work with hen keepers, neighbours, and other external stakeholders to ensure they are addressed and resolved in a timely manner. Failing to comply with the terms and conditions of an Urban Hen Keeping Licence may result in a fine of $100, or a licence being revoked. Keeping hens without a licence will result in a $500 fine.
- Egg production is for self-consumption. No sale of eggs is permitted.
- All public complaints shall be directed through 311; this reporting approach is consistent with the City of Edmonton bylaw complaint process.